

Reports by Judith Judd

Clarke sails through hail of criticism

Mr Charles Clarke, the president of the NUS, has survived a challenge to his leadership over the £150,000 lost because of the collapse of the travel and printing companies. A call for a vote of no confidence in him by Conservative and extreme leftwing groups was heavily defeated.

But Mr Clarke and the three other executive members of the services board were censured for their failure to consult sufficiently on the student discount travel scheme. They also narrowly escaped having their responsibility for services removed for mismanaging the affairs of the service companies. The voting was 337 to 297.

Mr Clarke said later the size of the no confidence vote against him was smaller than he had expected. He believed he had been helped by the split between those Conservatives who wanted to see a strong NUS and those who wanted to destroy it. He felt his position had been strengthened.

In a speech demanding a vote of no confidence Mr David Wither-Smith, Conservative, of the Middle Temple Students Association, said Mr Clarke had consistently misled students. He had even denied the existence of the set-off agreement governing the companies which had cost the union £43,000.

"Over three and a half years he has taken NUS to the brink of bankruptcy and the great mass of students do not trust him to save this union."

Mr Peter Ashby, deputy president, accused the Conservatives of opportunism.

In their attack on Mr Clarke and the three other members of the services board—Miss Penny Cooper, Mr David Aaronovitch and Mr Chris Morgan—the ultra-left called for the nationalisation of the service companies.

Mr Andy Durgan, an International Socialist executive member, said: "The leadership of NUS is designed to overemphasize the role of services. The role of the union should be a campaigning one." He said the executive had shown a total contempt for the employees of the service companies.

Conference called for an inquiry into the collapse of the service companies. It will consist of seven people, five appointed by conference, one elected by a student member and one member of the finance committee. The motion passed on the companies said the union could not expect to set up a travel company in the short or medium term. Earlier the executive faced angry questioning about its handling of the cash crisis.

Bankruptcy averted by Endsleigh Insurance sale

The NUS Insurance company, Endsleigh Insurance (Brokers), will be sold to save the union from bankruptcy. Conference made the decision after being warned by Mr Clarke that he believed this was the only course open to them.

He said Endsleigh, which last year made a profit of £100,000, had great cash flow problems which had been increased by the collapse of the travel and printing companies. It was severely undercapitalized.

The executive had considered whether to plough every asset it possessed into keeping the insurance company going. This would mean selling NUS headquarters, valued at about £370,000 but which would probably fetch about half that. It had also considered whether the money could be raised from individual student unions but neither of these schemes would raise enough cash.

"We believe the only way the security of the company and staff can be guaranteed is by selling Endsleigh." An offer for £300,000 had been received, open until December 23.

In reply to questions Mr Clarke said the NUS would still be involved in the new company. They would have two members on the board and hoped to receive an annual income of around £20,000 in commission. The union would make it a condition of the sale that the jobs of all staff would be safeguarded. The new company would continue to be student orientated. The offer to buy is believed to have come from a Dutch company, Gouda NV for

which Endsleigh acted as sole underwriter in this country.

Mr Stuart Bayless of Nottingham University said: "The decision to sell Endsleigh is the one that means we shall be able to come back here for our Easter conference. The increase in overdraft because the company has been so successful will mean that it will become a depreciating asset for us."

Other speakers argued that Endsleigh should not be sold because students would lose control over it. Mr Hugh Lanning of Middlesex Polytechnic asked whether delegates knew enough about the insurance company to vote to sell it. He suggested a working party to look into the proposed sale. Miss Penny Cooper, an executive member, said the decision must be taken rapidly to save the jobs of the staff.

Later Mr Clarke said the sale would put the union on a much firmer financial footing. He did not know how much money from the sale would be used to settle debts. NUS had no obligation under law to meet the liabilities of the liquidated companies, which include £175,000 owed to British Rail. He said the amount of annual income which might be obtained from the sale would be greater than the £15,000 a year income from the service companies. He hoped the union could carry on with plans to rebuild its headquarters and give its staff better salaries.

He said the insurance provides life, motor and other insurance for around 400,000 students and former students.

Demand for £1,185 national grant

Students will demand an increase in the student grant outside London from £875 to £1,185 and inside London from £955 to £1,290. The executive's proposals were ratified by conference on Saturday. The figures for next year's grant were backed up by a call for full grants for all students.

"According to the NUS, the full student grant is received by less than 20 per cent of the country's 750,000 full-time students. Conference, while agreeing that no particular grant demand should have priority, demanded that all those on advanced further education courses should receive mandatory grants immediately and for the abolition of discretionary awards in higher and further education."

It also repeated its call for an end to the means test for grants.

Mrs Williams accused of vicious attacks

Mrs Williams, Secretary of State for Education, had launched a series of vicious attacks on students, Mr Charles Clarke, the president, said in his opening speech.

She had lined up another 30 colleges for the axe and "by her vicious action had betrayed the hopes and expectations of a generation of young teachers." She had placed the Labour Government firmly against any future educational expansion. "It is a bitter indictment of her new office that these should be her first conscious acts," Mr Clarke said.

She had followed this up by imposing calculatedly vicious increases in fees for overseas students. "For over 10 years British industry has been drawing money away from these countries and it is not unreasonable for us to meet our moral and material obligations, by allowing students from the Third World to study here at reasonable cost instead of the exploitative rates now being charged."

Third, she had set by while the Government decided to cut students from the basic rights of the welfare state—the right to claim supplementary and unemployment benefit during winter and spring. The relevant clauses of the Bill would only become enacted in law against the bitter opposition of thousands of students. The conference would lay down a militant programme of action in fight for the right of students to have enough to eat.

Turning to the Conservatives he said Mrs Thatcher's new Shadow Cabinet was determined to destroy the social achievements of 30 years. They were prepared to rip apart the fabric of social welfare, health and education. Their freedom meant freedom to exploit and destroy. In the new education debate he said the NUS stood for the end of educational elitism. Education should not be the servant of private industry. Educational methods must be directed to the needs of the pupil or student and not the needs of the teacher, lecturer or potential employer.

He urged the union to "unite against external pressure." He said NUS had been weakened by the collapse of its service companies. The mistakes of the past must be investigated in detail.



Sir Keith Joseph being escorted to a taxi after the rumpus.

Leftist-Tory front forms to rescue Sir Keith

Sir Keith Joseph, the Conservative MP for Leeds, was elected from the conference with cries of "fascist" and "racist" during Friday night's debate on Government economic policy.

Members of the Broad Left executive formed a human wall with Conservatives to protect Sir Keith from ultra-left students. Conference voted that Sir Keith should be excluded 339-316. Then, as he tried to leave, a small group of students hissed and spat at him. One reason for excluding him was said to be his lack of visitors' credentials.

A meeting organized by the Federation of Conservative students which Sir Keith was to address was cancelled after a telephone call warned the hotel where it was to be held there might be disruption.

The trouble began when Mr Clarke, the president, drew attention to the fact that Sir Keith was in the public gallery listening to the debate. There were some shouts of "out out". Then about 20 ultra-left supporters stormed into the gallery and surrounded him. They shouted and four-letter words and jostled the MP and there were scuffles as those protecting him ward off them off.

He escaped in a taxi summoned by the executive. Later he said, "I am amazed that students should want to prevent an MP, anyone who wanted to listen from attending their conference."

At the suggestion of Steve Moon, the only Conservative on the executive, some of them left the hall in protest.

'Ban racists' policy to stay

by Peter Wilby

The conference reaffirmed the union's "no platform" policy on racists and fascists, despite an executive attempt to have it modified.

The new executive policy was that constituent unions "should not invite speakers from the National Front, the National Party and declared racist and fascist organizations." Some delegates, however, including many supporters of the ruling Broad Left, wanted to confirm the old policy of unions should not allow them in on the grounds that racists and fascists, even if someone else invited them on to the campus.

"This policy must be carried out by democratic action involving the maximum number of students and not through acts of individual violence," the amendment said.

For the executive, Mr Trevor Phillips said that he had written the "no platform" section into the original NUS policy established in 1974. But, he said, "it has failed to win students' assent and is therefore redundant and sterile."

The priority was the fight against racism and fascism and the existing policy had diverted attention to an abstract debate between the abstract idea of "no platform" and

the abstract idea of free speech. A new policy would be based on more widely supported anti-racism.

But, on a card vote, the conference was defeated by 275-365 to change the policy.

An ultra-left amendment, proposed by the Midlands branch, said: "We should not allow them in on the grounds that racists and fascists, even if someone else invited them on to the campus."

A Conservative vote, by 275-365, defeated, on a card vote, the amendment. It was stated that the extreme right-wing parties, the National Front and the National Party, should not be allowed in on the grounds that racists and fascists, even if someone else invited them on to the campus.

Proposing it, Mr David Smith, of the Midlands branch, said: "Total freedom of speech, even if it is non-negotiable, is a non-negotiable. We value democracy above all else."

Homerton to become part of Cambridge

by Judith Judd

Homerton College will become an approved university of Cambridge University. Members of the university's Regent House last week voted in favour of a scheme which will allow the college its new status and which will set up a new education tripos to replace the present BEd.

The voting was 420 to 222. Miss Alison Shrubsole, Homerton's principal, said: "We are all absolutely delighted by this decision which will assure the college's future."

Negotiations with the university have been going on since 1973. The result was of no means a foregone conclusion. Strong opposition came from some members of the university who feared that the college's standards were not high enough. Oxford turned down a similar request from its teacher training colleges.

But Homerton had a long tradition of a close association with the university and many dons were prepared to vouch for its academic standards. It will remain a voluntary college and the Department of Education and Science has already agreed to maintain its direct grant.

Miss Shrubsole said that the new tripos was unique in its transitory

nature. It would have a two-plus-two structure. Students would spend the first two years at Homerton studying education and their second two as members of the university. "The degree has a greatly increased emphasis on professional preparation for teaching." Final teaching practice would be in the fourth year.

She said the new tripos would also be taken by other undergraduates of the university who had read a tripos other than education for two years. They would do the second part of the education tripos gaining a BA instead of the BEd which would be awarded to Homerton students.

The date on which the college becomes an approved society will be fixed by the Council of the Senate. The draft instrument and articles of Government have to be approved by the Charities Commissioners and the Secretary of State for Education.

The present BEd examination will be taken for the last time in 1978. In 1979 students will take the new education degree. This means that those in their first and second years of Homerton will take the new degree.

Women's studies 'need to improve communications'

Academic specialists and grass-root workers in the women's movement should improve their communication with each other, delegates were told at the first national conference on the subject in Manchester last weekend.

Addressing the conference, Miss Jo Sinclair, a researcher at the General and Municipal Workers Union, made a strong plea that academic women's studies filter down to the workers.

"The role of women's studies is to change the whole ambience so that everyone, right down to the chicken plucker, is aware of all matters concerning the role of women in society today, and the need for change."

Earlier, Miss Margherita Rendel, of London University's Institute of Education, had opened the conference with a talk on the role of women's studies. This, she saw, as being a right a recovery—improving status and opportunity of women by replacing men's studies with human studies.

... women's studies are not so much a subject but a way of looking at things, and they can therefore exist in any subject."

Miss Rendel said some academics regard women's studies as a threat because they raise fundamental issues which cannot be ignored. They bring in new concepts and interpretations so that academics have to read new books and recast their lectures—something which they do not like having to do."

Mrs Jill Lewis, a Cambridge graduate recently elected from a post in America, gave an account of her experience of women's studies in America.

Delegates considered the extent to which men should be allowed to participate in women's studies. Members of the sociology workshop voted, after a lengthy discussion, to exclude the only two men present at the conference.

Other topics included women in philosophy, the problem of research in feminism, women and trade unions, and the Asian woman in British society.

The conference was organized by a women's studies group connected with Manchester University extra-mural department. More than 150 delegates attended.

Entry requirements too restrictive

Dr Tolley, of the Institution of Chemical Engineers, Midlands branch, said entry requirements for university and polytechnic engineering courses were too restrictive.

He identified three "grave faults" in degree courses: syllabus were overcrowded with outdated facts and theories; they were remote from the technological, social and intellectual problems of production; and they lacked credibility as general education, being viewed too much as specific training for a specific career.

Dr Tolley, addressing a symposium of the Institution of Chemical Engineers, Midlands branch, said entry requirements for university and polytechnic engineering courses were too restrictive.

"I see students coming into honours degree courses in history without history A level, into economics without economics A level. We have ourselves to blame for insisting upon a level of conditioning which is now unusual in other courses."

Professional engineering bodies could help by taking a more broad-minded attitude, Dr Tolley went on. They should encourage more interdisciplinary courses and "place a much greater emphasis on the need for retraining and planned mid-career training. It is here that there should be most fruitful collaboration with universities and polytechnics, instead of the over-solicitous and sometimes unduly restrictive concern with undergraduates courses."

Oxford rejects engineering course changes

The University of Oxford University rejected proposals to remodel the degree courses in engineering science. In a postal ballot, 328 voted to 171 to endorse a resolution calling on Hebdomadal Council to annul the decree which would have put the proposals into effect.

The proposals would have involved a radical change in the system of Final Honour Schools, not only as regards engineering science, but engineering science and economics as well.

In the first there would have been an examination at the end of the first two terms of the three-year course. The final examination would have been divided into two, with an examination at the end of the second year, and another at the end of the third year. The results of both examinations would have counted for honours classification.

In engineering science and economics some engineering papers would have been taken at the end of the second year with the remainder and all the economics papers being taken at the end of the third year.

The proposals had been put forward by the sub-faculty of engineering science, although the members were not unanimous. Tutors in other disciplines were critical. On the grounds that, if adopted, they would have isolated engineering science from the established system of Final Honour Schools being taken at the end of three years.

Unit to straighten out computer links

by Clive Cookson
Science Correspondent

A unit has been set up at the Science Research Council's Rutherford Laboratory to find a way out of the confusion existing in the university computer network and to plan an extension in a form compatible with national developments being undertaken by the Post Office and the Department of Industry.

The unit—known as the Network Unit of the Computer Board and the Research Council—is headed by Mr. Mervyn Williams, who retired as director of Telecommunications Development in the Post Office at the end of October. The other members are Dr. Roland Kasper of the Rutherford Laboratory and Mr. Chris Morris of Bristol University.

The project is being financed jointly by the SRC and the Computer Board for Universities and Research Councils. It is expected to last two years.

The present inter-university computer network, which developed in a series of steps, is described by Mr

Williams as "an exceedingly complex improvised series of connections". Universities and research council establishments have set up regional networks to share their facilities, and there are also nationwide connections between individual universities and the three big computing centres at Manchester and London—the Association of Computer Units in Colleges of Higher Education (ACUHE).

Until now computer provision in this sector has been determined by the demand from different authorities and approved upon the basis of developed practice. This has resulted in universities and research councils receiving £60m in the last 10 years whereas the public sector has had £15m.

The research project, consisting of two parallel studies funded by the Department of Education and Science will look closely at both cost and educational effectiveness of present systems. Questionnaires and visits will be used to gather data.

Mr Williams expects to publish information gathered by his unit in the newsletters of the Inter University Committee on Computing. A progress report will go to the SRC and the Computer Board next May.

● A research project to determine a sound policy on computer use and provision in the non-university sector by 1978 has been launched by the Association of Computer Units in Colleges of Higher Education (ACUHE).

Until now computer provision in this sector has been determined by the demand from different authorities and approved upon the basis of developed practice. This has resulted in universities and research councils receiving £60m in the last 10 years whereas the public sector has had £15m.

Skimming off graduate 'cream' not enough, employers told

by Frances Gibb

Employers should aim not for the pure strain of top quality graduates but for the broad middle band, say the staff of the Administrative Staff College, Henley, told a conference on graduate recruitment last week.

Launching a new book, *The Graduate Connection*, of which he is co-author with Mr S. D. Pearce, K. Jackson of the Administrative Staff College, Henley, told a conference on graduate recruitment last week.

First, there was never enough "cream" to go round; second, it was not the best method for skimming it off; and third, it was doubtful whether these students were necessarily the best for the job.

Dr Jackson, who was addressing a selection of employers' careers officers and students and representatives from the Careers Research and Advisory Centre which published the book, also attacked recruitment procedures for being rigid.

Sources of supply became mixed because employers tended to build up relations with certain polytechnics or universities and that determined the source of their recruits.

It was up to the local branches of the firms to change the source of supply by establishing new contacts with their local institutions and putting over a correct image of their firm.

Most employers were too passive in their recruitment of graduates, he said. They should not wait until they had seen all the candidates, but make offers much more quickly.

Mr Pearce, speaking on recruitment from the student's point of view, said there was now a realisation among employers, which the authors run in Oxford, called "preparing for the university milkround". This was designed to enable managers to improve their

methods of selecting graduates. He outlined some problems students faced in recruitment: how, for instance, to make a positive impression on a representative from a firm, when still far from clear what he wants to do, can do and what the firm would like him to do.

Employers would do well to recognize that a student may quite legitimately be interested in a wide range of possible career patterns.

One common characteristic of a contracted economy is employment at a lower than warranted level, Professor Donald Super, honorary director of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling, told a seminar in London this week.

In accepting a job at a lower level than he merited a candidate not only accepted a label which misclassified him but bumped the qualified still further down the ladder.

Studies had shown that the best graduates going into academic work tended to get jobs in what are viewed as the best institutions. Thus even the best Oxbridge graduates who took a post at the Egham College of Technology was not likely to move from there to a university post at Manchester or Keele, he said.

"This is partly because he has accepted a less-esteemed label and partly because he works in a situation which makes it difficult for him to do some of the things that would make him look like a good candidate at a distinguished university."

The seminar, entitled "Careers in a contracted economy" and organized by CRAC, was attended by those concerned with careers and recruitment from schools, colleges and industry.

The *Graduate Connection*: a guide to graduate recruitment, from Hobson's Press (Cambridge) Ltd, Bate-man Street, Cambridge CB2 1LZ. £4.95 inc postage.

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Annabel Ferriman on mature students, their continuing growth and problems

Polys and universities open their doors wider

Over the past 10 years the number of mature students on first degree courses in Britain has grown considerably, both absolutely and as a proportion of the total student population—taking mature students to mean undergraduate students of 25 or over. In 1967 there were 46,750 on university undergraduate courses, 4.6 per cent of the total, and only 222 on degree courses run by the Council for National Academic Awards, 8.5 per cent of the total. By 1973 they had risen to 11,988 in universities (6.07 per cent of the total) and 1,655 on CNAAs (11.98 per cent of the total) (Tables 2 and 3).

The reasons appear to be two-fold: the expansion of the new universities and polytechnics, most of which from their inception have been fairly sympathetic to mature students, and the increasing willingness of some of the older universities to relax their entry requirements.

Most of the new ones have adopted a positive attitude, several emphasizing in their entry requirements that they welcome or encourage such students, and this is reflected in their intake figures. Mature

entrants at Essex, Sussex and Lancaster last year accounted for 21 per cent, 11.5 per cent and 10.2 per cent of the total, respectively.

Polytechnics, of course, make a point of entering for mature students and those who need retraining, one polytechnic (North London) going so far as having at one time a course with a minimum age requirement of 35. Part-time courses are one way in which these students' needs are met and Table 4 shows how entrants to part-time CNAAs courses have been growing, while the total of part-time undergraduate students at universities has been falling.

Recent years have also seen the liberalization of entry requirements by some older universities, London being a case in point. In 1970 only 7 per cent of its undergraduate intake was 25 or over, but in 1975 11.5 per cent of its intake was "mature".

This could well be explained by the fact that its regulations changed in 1971. Until then, its schools could apply to leave an unqualified student admitted if they had shown "exceptional ability". That year, the wording was changed to "competence". Birkbeck takes many mature students into part-time courses.

Table 1

University	Mature students*	1973-74
Aberdeen	361	2,671
Aberystwyth	87	4,805
Aston	269	2,399
Birmingham	114	1,126
Bristol	126	2,119
Belfast	317	2,350
Birmingham	430	4,984
Birmingham	183	3,476
Birmingham	285	5,691
Birmingham	278	1,912
Birmingham	417	3,728
Birmingham	173	1,917
Birmingham	175	2,421
Birmingham	291	3,140
Birmingham	500	7,888
Birmingham	361	1,849
Birmingham	115	3,363
Birmingham	423	8,072
Birmingham	213	2,209
Birmingham	116	2,201
Birmingham	166	297
Birmingham	271	3,314
Birmingham	417	8,008
Birmingham	101	3,093
Birmingham	345	6,040
Birmingham	2,081	26,328
Birmingham	138	3,188
Birmingham	487	8,480
Birmingham	104	2,503
Birmingham	316	5,469
Birmingham	101	4,859
Birmingham	309	8,760
Birmingham	247	4,333
Birmingham	253	3,464
Birmingham	69	5,367
Birmingham	249	2,619
Birmingham	285	2,855
Birmingham	230	1,933
Birmingham	406	4,296
Birmingham	203	1,513
Birmingham	182	3,295
Birmingham	176	2,495
Birmingham	225	1,351
Birmingham	203	1,513
Birmingham	273	3,274
Birmingham	135	528
Birmingham	135	2,304

* Undergraduate students of 25 or over on full-time and sandwich courses

Table 2

Students at universities in Great Britain	Mature	Total Percentage
1967	7,550	4.58
1968	8,628	4.97
1969	9,276	5.14
1970	9,966	5.36
1971	10,619	5.77
1972	11,236	6.07
1973	11,988	6.07

Table 3

First year entrants on CNAAs courses	Mature	Total Percentage
1967	232	2,600
1968	259	2,983
1969	276	3,125
1970	310	3,425
1971	360	4,076
1972	405	4,540
1973	455	5,080

Table 4

Entrants to part-time degree courses	Total	Entrants to part-time degree courses
1970	4,906	490
1971	1,129	720
1972	1,092	941
1973	1,172	995

All qualified will be considered but entrance hurdles abound

All universities will consider applications from mature students who are qualified, that is from those who possess two A levels, with a few exceptions in certain subjects. Bath and Brunel, for example, will only consider applications from qualified mature students for science courses, and Aberdeen University will not consider applications for medicine from anyone over 30, "bearing in mind the need to staff the medical profession adequately".

When it comes to unqualified students, however, attitudes vary enormously. Universities with the most positive attitudes seem to be the new ones and Brunel, Keele, Nottingham, Reading, Southampton and Surrey, Heriot-Watt, Edinburgh and Strathclyde and to a lesser extent those making up the Joint Matriculation Board (Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Sheffield).

Applicants to the JMB universities, if they are over 21 and do not have two A levels, can enter by means of a special test. This does not follow a set pattern and has no set requirements or syllabuses, so that it can be adapted to meet the needs and background of individual candidates. Not all applicants are allowed to take it, however, they have to be approved first by the university of their choice.

Mr Rob Sawyers, deputy director of extra-mural studies and tutor to mature students at Birmingham University, thinks that this test is a serious disadvantage. At Birmingham, it usually consists of an essay paper, a general paper covering some arts and science subjects and a maths paper.

He considers the maths paper unnecessary unless the student is going to study some related subject and would prefer to see a system based more closely on the method used at present for selecting students who have been attending the university's extra-mural courses.

If they have the backing of their tutor and can produce some good written work of their own, they are excused the examination. They are, however, asked to write an essay on why they want to go to university and why they want to study their chosen subject.

Mr Sawyers thinks that the test could be extended to those students who are attending extra-mural classes and tutors at Open University, Workers' Education Association classes could be used. Then the same procedure could be followed. He states that the present system makes it exceptionally difficult for an unqualified student to enter university.

Entry tests for mature students are also set by Strathclyde and Nottingham, but students' social studies applicants by Essex, and Reading. At Kent and Lancaster, short-listed candidates who are asked to attend an interview are usually asked to write an essay.

Sussex, which has a reputation for taking mature students, where one in four undergraduates are over 21, has a special entry scheme for students who are either

A great many applying under the scheme drop out as soon as they receive the essay title.

Of about 130 special applicants last year, only about 90 submitted an essay and of these about 60 were called to interview; 31 offers were made. The method is designed to ensure that those who are accepted are highly motivated.

Most of the other universities which do not set any entrance tests require, in Leicester's words, "evidence of sustained serious study of an academic kind since leaving school", or attendance at an adult education college.

The widely differing attitudes of universities to mature students is most obvious in Appendix III of *Compendium of University Entrance Requirements*, in which the different regulations are laid out.

East Anglia and Essex, for example, emphasize that it is their policy to encourage and welcome such applicants, Essex stating that "sympathetic consideration is given to mature students not offering normal entrance requirements".

Other universities adopt a much less encouraging stance. Exeter and Bristol, for example, both state that applications will be considered "exceptionally" from those whose qualifications are "deemed sufficient".

The Society for Research into Higher Education book *People in Polytechnics: a survey of polytechnic staff and students 1972-73* shows a considerable variation of numbers at different polytechnics. In 1972-73 at Bristol, only 1 per cent of degree students were mature, compared to 26 per cent at North London; the percentage of full-time degree students who were mature ranged from five per cent at Strathclyde to 46 per cent at North London, and the percentage of mature part-time students varied from 25 per cent at Birmingham to 73 per cent at Polytechnic of Central London.

The most consistent picture that appeared was that the six polytechnics in London had a much higher proportion on each type of course than polytechnics elsewhere.

Various pressure groups, such as the Workers' Educational Association and the Trades Union Congress, have been campaigning for a number of years to increase the number of mature students that the universities and polytechnics are prepared to admit.

In a policy document produced earlier this year, the TUC suggested that every university should have a target of 2 per cent of its intake of mature students, and recently it met the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals to discuss ways of increasing mature student numbers.

It was agreed that a pamphlet, stating the universities' regulations regarding mature students, should be printed for distribution by the trade unions.

The number of mature students

Near top of their class

The average university mature student, if such a thing existed, would be male, under 35 and reading arts, social science, or engineering. The predominance of men among mature students is illustrated by the fact that although the proportion of mature women students at universities has been growing (from 25 per cent in 1967 to 38 per cent in 1973) it is still considerably less than half the total.

On the question of age, while many universities report a fairly even distribution of mature students under and over 30, the number over 35 is relatively small. At Sussex, where the mature student intake is carefully monitored, the largest single group of applicants over the past three years was made up of people born in the baby-burge years of 1947 and 1948.

Miss Caroline Broadway, the assistant admissions officer, felt this could be accounted for by many well qualified people competing for places in 1968 and 1967 not getting in because of the exceptionally tough competition and now coming back for a second chance. She said they were interested to see what would happen when this age group reached 35, the usual cut-off point for applications.

The most popular subjects with mature students in universities appear to be social studies, especially social work, and the humanities, particularly English literature. In Scotland, however, where mature students are defined as those of 23 and over, a large proportion study engineering, which accounts at least in part for the large numbers admitted by the Scottish technological universities.

At Strathclyde, for example, 17.1 per cent of those admitted in 1974 were "mature", compared to 2.7 per cent at St Andrews, which has a reputation for taking mature students in sociology, social administration or engineering.

The average polytechnic mature student would also be male, but would be out a professional or

The change can bring stress to families

Table 4

Entrants to part-time degree courses	Total	Entrants to part-time degree courses
1970	4,906	490
1971	1,129	720
1972	1,092	941
1973	1,172	995

Table 5

Mature student's grant	Supplement to grant rate (£)
Age at beginning of course	
26	68
27	136
28	204
29	272
30 or over	340

Many of the problems of the mature student are the same as those of any other student but some additional ones can be identified.

There is the obvious financial sacrifice that many mature students have to make to live on a grant instead of a wage or salary. Their grant is not substantially larger than that of an ordinary student (Table 5), so that it bears little relation to what a man or woman might be earning at the age of 35 or 40.

There are special allowances for dependents and for having to maintain two homes, one for the student during term time and one for his family; but these are small. The two-home allowance is £65 a year, and the first child allowance is £195, with £115 allowed for each subsequent child.

But there are no extra travelling expenses for a mature student studying away from his wife and family who wants to see them in term time.

Apart from this obvious financial sacrifice, there are sometimes others less obvious but equally serious. One mature student who enrolled at the London School of Economics this year, for example, had to give up his job in his pension rights at the age of 49, even though he had worked for the same firm for 22 years.

He had asked for three years unpaid leave but was refused. He could not withdraw his pension contributions because of the rule that anyone earning over £5,000 a year was not allowed to.

Then there is the problem of returning to study after a long absence. Many mature students find examinations very difficult at first because, unlike their 18-year-old counterparts, they are out of the habit of studying.

Mr Robert Breach, the deputy principal, with the gentlest of smiles, may not be aggressive but he is certainly determined. It was he who set King Alfred's on the road to diversification as long ago as the James report. It was also he who suggested, not altogether seriously, that the college should be a BA(Hons) college in history with associated English or drama, and recruitment has been good despite the fact that approval for the course came through only in June. A BA(Hons) in English is now being considered by the CNAAs.

King Alfred's did explore the possibility of associations with Winchester School of Art, the College of St Michael, Salisbury, and the University of Southampton. But the pull of independence was strong. The college wanted fully fledged honours degrees, not the BA(Coll) which was on offer from Southampton, so they took the plunge.

Mr Rose, a keen supporter of CNAAs validation, admits that the path he took was fraught with difficulties. There have been delays, uncertainties about the college's special status, and the staff have had to make difficult decisions.

Some mature students become very bitter. They claim, quite correctly, that the university likes to have them because of the contribution so much to seminars and discussion groups, but that it makes little effort to help them with their particular study problems, she said.

Another difference between mature students and others, she said, was that the former often knew what they wanted to study and were much more inclined to accept what was put in front of them.

Ms Routh also pointed out that some mature students had personal problems resulting from the financial strains that studying put on their family life. Some men found that they changed while studying and grew away from their wives.

Her experience suggested that for men, going to university late sometimes precipitated a crisis in their marriages, whereas many of the women had come to university as the result of a crisis in their marriage and subsequent separation or divorce.

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How King Alfred's shed the sherry glass image

With colleges of education throughout the country struggling to meet the requirements of new validating bodies, King Alfred's College, Winchester, is one of only five to receive validation for a BA Honours degree course from the Council for National Academic Awards.

It is not easy to find the recipe for this success. Lecturers are still reeling after a series of CNAAs visits, and are a little puzzled about how they finally made the grade. The college is the only church college to seek validation from the CNAAs, and even students say the way in which it has shed its older, old-fashioned look for a tougher modern image, is remarkable. On its first visit the CNAAs told the staff they were being far too polite. "I think we have managed to become a bit more aggressive," says Mr Robert Breach, the deputy principal, with the gentlest of smiles.

Mr Marjorie Rose, the principal, may not be aggressive but he is certainly determined. It was he who set King Alfred's on the road to diversification as long ago as the James report. It was also he who suggested, not altogether seriously, that the college should be a BA(Hons) college in history with associated English or drama, and recruitment has been good despite the fact that approval for the course came through only in June. A BA(Hons) in English is now being considered by the CNAAs.

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Leader, page 12

ents can gain first-hand experience and take part in research. The school is unusual in taking children from birth to five, and it teaches normal children alongside handicapped ones. The college offers a diploma in special education which is full-time and a two-year part-time one was validated by CNAAs on November 29.

The education department is increasingly looking to such part-time courses to cope with the cut-back in teacher-training numbers. A part-time BED in-service course for qualified teachers has just been validated by CNAAs. Mr R. L. Ashman, course director of the BED degree, hopes that in-service courses will replace some of the initial teacher training. He is doubtful about the Government's commitment to in-service education, and the department has decided to concentrate mainly on part-time in-service. Even so, he feels there may be problems; the college has already noticed that teachers are having difficulty with secondment. A part-time diploma in guidance and counselling is also being considered.

The special subject options in the BED degree have already been cut back with a firmness which is typical of the college's approach to diversification. King Alfred's philosophy has been to concentrate on offering a few options of high quality rather than a whole range.

Dr Brian Tippet, dean of the school of arts and sciences, says the college has been to produce courses complete in themselves. He and the other lecturers, oppose what they call "the cafeteria qualifications" system produced by modular courses. In the present dispute about concurrent and co-secure training for teachers, the college strongly favours the concurrent method in which the professional and academic elements of the course are studied at the same time and together. The concurrent model allows a student to enter a two-year course for the DipHE without commitment to teaching and to continue to a BED if he wishes.

The result of this commitment to concurrent training is a decision to support proposals to the CNAAs for a DipHE which is complete in itself. The diploma will draw particularly

on the disciplines of biology, geography, sociology, media studies and mathematics. The course will stand on its own in exactly the same way as, say, the history BA, and it will not be possible for those who take it to continue their studies at the college through outlets at other institutions are being negotiated.

Mr Breach believes that there is a need for two-year courses and that this was the whole point of the original DipHE proposal. He points out that, apart from strong educational arguments which have led the college to support the concurrent system, there are other reasons why King Alfred's should go on as it has begun.

Three-year degree courses are cheaper than four-year ones and courses which involve two years extra study may well run into difficulties over grants. He sees the college's future as "a mini polytechnic" offering three-year honours degrees in restricted areas as well as the BED. There is no problem about recruiting students with two A levels—more than 80 per cent already fall into this category.

The transformation of the college into Mr Breach's mini polytechnic has had an interesting effect on relations between staff and students. John Dennis, a former president of the students' union, said: "Before diversification it was all sherry glass diplomacy. Now we go in and we state our point of view and they state theirs. There is tough negotiation. Students have been given voting rights on the College Council and on committees discussing new courses, and they have been able to make their presence felt in decision making. Last year they played an important role in the college's decision to retain some shortage subjects because of the teacher unemployment position."

The students are confident that King Alfred's has a future in the individual niche it has dug out for itself. As John Dennis put it: "Of course there are difficulties, but nobody really thinks we are going to close."

Judith Judd

Sue Reid looks at the growth of extra-mural classes whose lecturers have included Asquith and T. S. Eliot

A 'century of achievement' in adult education

In the autumn of 1876 seven adult education courses, including one on political economy given by Herbert Asquith, later to become Prime Minister, were launched by the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching. It was the start of an educational venture which was to have a profound impact on education in London, and later the whole country, by extending education of a university standard to people until then totally excluded.

Now, a century later, the London University extra-mural provision includes about 1,000 courses a year for the enrolment of more than 20,000 students. Last month the university celebrated the centenary of the birth of university adult education in London. The occasion will be marked this month by the publication of a book by Mr Burrows, senior staff lecturer within the university's department of extra-mural studies, outlining the "century of achievement".

University Adult Education in London traces the growth of adult education provision from the first seven classes launched in the autumn term of 1876 at the London Institution, Birkbeck Institution, the Working Men's College, the City of London College, and a college in Wimbledon.

Arranged under the auspices of the London Society, which held its first meeting at the Mansion House in March the same year, the classes were, the book says, "clearly novel and unlike the teaching practices at the university".

The London Society steadily gained support. From 139 student enrolments for the first seven courses, the numbers grew to 5,084 in 1886, and 15,407 in 1901 when 103 sessions and 12 tutorial courses were started at 59 centres.

Standards required from lecturers in the early days had to be high. Mr Burrows states that the London Society said they were to be "of the highest academic honours and thoroughly qualified for the communication of knowledge and the stimulation of thought".

Young men from Oxford and Cambridge were often regarded as suitable material. Herbert Asquith, having completed his legal training, gave five courses while in his mid-twenties. One of the centres

used for the early extension classes in East London, attracted hundreds of manual workers, probably in larger numbers than have ever since attended university adult classes in the London area, the book says. But other centres found it much more difficult to achieve a social mix.

Under the University of London Act 1898, a "Board to Promote the Extension of University Teaching" was appointed to take over the work of the London Society. It was set up to promote the traditional work of university extension, but the statutes also authorized BPPUT to "grant any certificate of proficiency in any subjects of study to any student of the university".

By the beginning of the First World War 135 classes were being run under the auspices of BPPUT. Although the number declined during the war years, Mr Burrows points out that there were some gifted tutors, perhaps the most distinguished being T. S. Eliot who conducted his literature class at Southall over three sessions in 1916 to 1918.

Extension classes languished during the Second World War—the

Michaelmas programme in 1939 was abandoned because of "serious bombardment and courses were resumed only in 1940—but the tutorial provision gained momentum. By 1944, 55 classes were held at 44 centres, almost double the number five years earlier.

The expansion in the years after 1945 was remarkable. In 1946-47 there were 78 London University extension courses which attracted 3,205 students; by 1951 the number of courses had grown to 285 with a student enrolment of 7,500. Tutorial classes expanded more slowly.

In the academic year 1952-53, the University's Council for Extra-Mural Studies functioned for the first time and the book shows that the last three decades of adult education provided by the university have been ones of real growth. University Adult Education in London, by John Burrows. Published by the University of London on December 3 and distributed by the National Institute of Adult Education, De Montfort House, Leicester (E1.25).

Back to school—the future of continuing education

"Continuing education" is understood by the committee to include all learning opportunities which are taken up after full-time compulsory schooling has ceased. They can be full or part-time and will include both vocational and non-vocational study. For the purposes of this report on the Open University's contribution

towards continuing education, the committee has deliberately excluded consideration of the education of 16 and 17-year-olds, whether still in full-time schooling or in other forms of further education, as well as of higher education which follows on without a break after schooling has ceased. We have therefore chosen to focus attention on education for adults which is normally

resumed after a break or interruption, often in a period in employment. The undergraduate programme of the Open University itself is also excluded from this report. We see the centre of debate as being the question of whether continuing education should be extended by the Open University if so, how and in which directions.

The national scene

In relation to a national provision for continuing education, the committee recommends that the council should lend its support to the following:

- (i) Moves to create a National Council for Adult and Continuing Education with terms of reference and funding which will ensure that it is enabled to play a role of the kind outlined both directly and through specialized agencies responsible to it.
- (ii) The establishment of a National Educational Advisory Service for Adults.
- (iii) Every effort, to preserve access for the largest possible number of students in any programme of continuing education, recognizing that the fees charged to the student are a major factor in determining access.
- (iv) Moves towards positive discrimination in favour of those adults who have not benefited from a mandatory award previously, and those who are not eligible under the recommendation on paid educational leave; and in addition the keeping of fees for continuing education as low as possible and their reduction for those who have been given less by the educational system so far.
- (v) Efforts to persuade the Government to fund its undertaking to the International Labour Organisation convention on paid educational leave.
- (vi) Action in concert with other appropriate bodies to secure an adequate provision of educational facilities and allowances for the disabled adult.
- (vii) The integrated development and use of the library services, both public and in educational institutions and colleges as part of a general improvement of the national resource in continuing education.
- (viii) Pressure for a considerable increase in time for educational broadcasting, and particularly for continuing education.
- (ix) A sustained analysis from the outset of developments of the problems of copyright, contracts, compatibility of technical equipment, editorial responsibility and other operational and legal problems.
- (x) Any national moves designed to increase the opportunities for part-time postgraduates to study at universities in the United Kingdom.

The Open University

In relation to the Open University contribution to continuing education, the committee recommends:

- 1 that the council, in furtherance of the recommendation earlier, should encourage the university, especially through its central services, to stimulate and support the development of an educational advisory service for adults.
- 2 that (a) preferably in collaboration with other relevant bodies, the Open University should undertake research in the educational needs of adults in order to determine appropriate provision; and (b) the Open University's own developing contribution to continuing education, whether by itself or in collaboration with others, should be continuously evaluated.
- 3 that the council should give support to the post-experience courses unit for the early development and provision of a course available to all teachers to increase their understanding of mathematical ideas.
- 4 that the university should continue to develop its own initiative and in conjunction with others.
- 5 that the Open University should, under the leadership of its central services, produce experimental packages of learning materials covering topics of adult concern, which may be offered for use by other institutions.
- 6 that when the Open University

Education over compulsory school age in England and Wales 1974-75

	Men					Women					Men and Women				
	16-17	18-20	21 & over	Total (16 & over)		16-17	18-20	21 & over	Total (16 & over)		16-17	18-20	21 & over	Total (16 & over)	
Schools	35.3	2.6	—	1.6		35.4	2.1	—	1.4		35.3	2.4	—	1.5	
Further Education (excluding polytechnics)															
Full-time	7.1	3.4	0.2	0.7	9.2	2.9	0.1	0.6	3.6	3.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.6
Sandwich	0.2	0.5	—	0.1	0.2	0.2	—	—	0.2	0.4	0.1	—	—	0.1	0.1
Part-time day	21.6	16.1	0.7	2.5	6.9	3.2	0.8	1.2	14.4	10.2	0.8	1.8	2.0	1.8	1.8
Evening only	4.0	3.9	1.1	0.6	5.0	5.0	2.1	2.4	3.3	3.4	1.7	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Total	32.8	24.8	2.3	4.9	22.9	11.2	3.1	4.2	28.0	18.2	2.7	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
Polytechnics															
Full-time	—	1.3	0.1	0.2	—	1.0	0.1	0.1	—	1.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Sandwich	—	1.0	0.1	0.1	—	0.2	—	—	—	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Part-time day	0.1	0.8	0.2	0.2	—	0.2	—	—	—	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Evening only	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	0.2	3.2	0.5	0.7	—	1.5	0.1	0.2	0.1	2.4	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Evening Institutes	8.1	4.1	2.4	2.8	8.3	5.7	6.0	6.1	8.2	4.9	4.3	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
Colleges of education	—	1.1	0.1	0.2	—	4.3	0.2	0.4	—	2.7	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Universities	—	6.5	0.5	0.8	—	3.9	0.2	0.3	—	5.3	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Total	76.5	42.4	5.9	11.0	66.6	28.7	9.5	12.6	71.7	35.7	7.8	11.8	11.8	11.8	11.8

presents a course to its own registered students, that course should offer optional assessment and certification.

The Open University should pursue exploratory schemes of collaboration with a number of existing examination boards and should lead strong support to any moves made nationally to provide accreditation of adult concern courses at standards equivalent to GCE O and A levels and SCE O and H grades.

Tutor training
8 that the university in developing its commitment to professional and non-vocational education should do so particularly in relation to the training of adult education tutors and through collaboration with other appropriate institutions.

Professional and vocational courses and materials
9 that the council should encourage collaboration with appropriate interested bodies in the production of further post-experience courses in the professional and vocational fields, and should investigate the development of initial "core" training materials in particular areas.

Development of current non-undergraduate activities
10 that the university should increase the provision of updating and refresher courses at the post-graduate level, open both to graduates and appropriately prepared non-graduates.

Special concerns
11 that the Open University should become directly involved in home-based distance teaching designed specifically for 16 and 17 year olds.

12 that the positive statement of intent made by the University Council to meet the needs of disabled students on existing courses should apply equally to those who enrol on new courses in a continuing education programme.

13 that the university, in all its regions, should investigate the possibility of developing local collaborative schemes which take due account of the differences in regional needs and resources.

14 that the university should develop a continuing education programme which should develop still further its relationship with the other branches of Scottish higher, adult and community education, in order to have regard to the distinctiveness of Scottish circumstances and the development of a Scottish dimension.

Use of facilities
17 that the university should seek to initiate pilot experiments with polytechnics and colleges of further and higher education whereby part-time students using independent learning methods might spend one day a week or equivalent in local laboratories or other workplace provided by such institutions.

Broadcasting resources
18 that the university should investigate the desirability and feasibility of establishing regional and local pilot developments involving the appropriate broadcasting agencies.

19 that there should be greater reciprocity of use between educational programmes prepared by the Open University, as suggested by the Further Education Advisory Council of the BBC and that action to enable this to be achieved should be taken as soon as possible.

20 that in the initial stages of planning of continuing education projects, the university should give adequate study to the choice of the most appropriate means of production and distribution of any audio-visual components whether by broadcasting or by cassette, disc, or other methods.

21 that the university should proceed quickly to investigate the setting up of teleconference links between study centres through means of appropriate telephone services.

22 that the university should maintain close liaison with the appropriate national bodies concerned with open learning systems and national resources, and in particular the Council for Educational Technology and the Scottish Council for Educational Technology, to encourage the development of a national network of resource centres.

23 that the council should take immediate steps to introduce the phased development of an Open University Learning Resources Centre, for information, materials, advice, training, design and production.

The continuing education division
24 that the council should draw up a constitution for a continuing education division with a delegated certain agreed powers to administer the development of all those aspects of continuing education in the university's own work and of such the respective co-operating bodies. The former do include those relating to first and higher degree programmes, but do cover the design of courses and their accreditation, liaison with collaborating institutions and the development of a learning resources centre.

25 that council, in developing the work of the university in pursuing the objects in the charter, should ensure that its contribution is properly safeguarded and that the proposed expansion of the con-

tinuing education programme should be financed from additional funds. 26 that (a) the university should make submissions to government for additions to the present block grant, earmarked for the development of a programme of continuing education, and that such grant should be not wholly recoverable from student fees;

(b) the university should continue to seek sponsors for specific projects in the programme of continuing education; and (c) the university should recommend that the proposed National Council for Adult and Continuing Education should have funds made available to it to facilitate the collaborative creation of a national programme of continuing education, using existing facilities wherever possible.

Phased development
27 that (a) the level of underwriting for the post-experience programme already agreed for 1977-79 should be maintained; and

(b) the following organizational and other proposals should be implemented, as evidence of a firm commitment to the progressive development of continuing education:

(i) the establishment of the design planning of the division with the post-experience unit as a nucleus;

(ii) an investigation of the Open University as a learning resource centre;

(iii) the planning of continuing education course provision and materials production for the years after 1979;

(iv) the drafting of a resource submission for 1980-82, for incorporation in the university's general submission to the Department of Education and Science for that triennium.

National Educational Advisory Service for Adults: an outline structure

The nature of the service at local level. Information on the range of adult education opportunities, locally and nationally, needs to be coordinated, presented attractively and disseminated widely throughout the community. However, information alone is insufficient. Adults require access to advice and counselling on educational opportunity. This implies trained staff with time to reach adults and listen to their educational concerns prior to any recommendations about which course or institution to aim for. The adviser has to discern what the adult's present goals are to relate the array of information to the individual's personal objectives and to assist the adult to see the implications of alternative choices. In such advice, educational and vocational implications will be frequently interrelated. The system

matic monitoring of adult education demands would be to ensure a more responsive service to meet them.

Setting up of local service
A number of local adult education committees, based on local authority areas, have begun to take responsibility for planning and monitoring their own local educational service. The essence of such a service appears to be:

- (a) a commitment on the part of the local authority, the responsible bodies, representatives of national authorities, the Open University, industrial and commercial organizations, national guidance units, the services agency, the university executive register, the Educational Association, national voluntary organizations;
- (b) the employment of professional staff;
- (c) volunteer support from butting agencies to extend the service (in short hours, during the advice team and away from towards major points of the adult community).

There is a strong case for existing plans and suggestions from dependence on previous educational institutions, sometimes using town centre offices (for example, clinics, public libraries, local advice centres), sometimes in the use of clubs and workshops. This is clearly for each local area to decide for itself. However, specialist advisory services, which are centralized or diffused at operation, should be developed to the development of sensitive advice and counselling to adults who are themselves as recruits to local vicars of education. Enrolment more than simply signing up to a course and local providers who refer any students who want to have applied without preparation, and in ignorance of the range of possibilities available where, to the specialist educational advisory service.

Local advisory services would be related to other regional and national levels.

The national level
There would still be a national body for such a service and it would be for the Department of Education and Science to decide whether a service could appropriately be coordinated and developed in the Department of Education and Science, or whether the National Council for Adult and Continuing Education.

The tasks that we envisage for the national body would include:

- (a) coordination of information on the state of modern languages at universities and polytechnics. Some departments are not able to fill their courses even after lowering the entry grades, and this in turn has led to loose talk about lowering of standards and levels of linguistic competence.

It is worth considering whether this gloom is really justified. The figures in the table below have been extracted from the tables recently circulated by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT).

These figures show that not only

Full-time first-year undergraduates in UK universities on three-year courses

Report available free from the secretary, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA.

Skilled architect of bridges between labour and learning

Bernard Jennings looks at the life of Albert Mansbridge, founder of the WEA, who was born 100 years ago

Albert Mansbridge, who was born 100 years ago, was one of the great creative forces of English adult education. He is best known as the founder of the Workers' Educational Association, and the chief architect of the tutorial class movement which developed some five years later. But he had many more achievements to his credit.

He transplanted the WEA to Australia. He established several workers organizations concerned with adult education, including the Adult Association for Adult Education, the Central Library for the Workers' Educational Association, and the National Council for Adult Education. He was also a pioneer in the provision of a service to the unemployed in the localities in which he worked. He included: the local education authority, the responsible bodies, representatives of national authorities, the Open University, industrial and commercial organizations, national guidance units, the services agency, the university executive register, the Educational Association, national voluntary organizations;

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The tasks that we envisage for the national body would include:

- (a) coordination of information on the state of modern languages at universities and polytechnics. Some departments are not able to fill their courses even after lowering the entry grades, and this in turn has led to loose talk about lowering of standards and levels of linguistic competence.

It is worth considering whether this gloom is really justified. The figures in the table below have been extracted from the tables recently circulated by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT).

These figures show that not only

Full-time first-year undergraduates in UK universities on three-year courses

Report available free from the secretary, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA.

Albert Mansbridge, who was born 100 years ago, was one of the great creative forces of English adult education. He is best known as the founder of the Workers' Educational Association, and the chief architect of the tutorial class movement which developed some five years later. But he had many more achievements to his credit.

He transplanted the WEA to Australia. He established several workers organizations concerned with adult education, including the Adult Association for Adult Education, the Central Library for the Workers' Educational Association, and the National Council for Adult Education. He was also a pioneer in the provision of a service to the unemployed in the localities in which he worked. He included: the local education authority, the responsible bodies, representatives of national authorities, the Open University, industrial and commercial organizations, national guidance units, the services agency, the university executive register, the Educational Association, national voluntary organizations;

(b) the employment of professional staff;

(c) volunteer support from butting agencies to extend the service (in short hours, during the advice team and away from towards major points of the adult community).

There is a strong case for existing plans and suggestions from dependence on previous educational institutions, sometimes using town centre offices (for example, clinics, public libraries, local advice centres), sometimes in the use of clubs and workshops. This is clearly for each local area to decide for itself. However, specialist advisory services, which are centralized or diffused at operation, should be developed to the development of sensitive advice and counselling to adults who are themselves as recruits to local vicars of education. Enrolment more than simply signing up to a course and local providers who refer any students who want to have applied without preparation, and in ignorance of the range of possibilities available where, to the specialist educational advisory service.

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Small businesses get campus 'surgery'

A regional centre to help small businesses was officially dedicated at California State Polytechnic University last week by the administrator of the government's Small Business Administration (SBA). It is one of eight being established in American universities to allow students and teachers in departments of business administration to play a more active part in helping local industry.

The Cal Poly Centre at Pomona will be rather like a clinic, where local entrepreneurs can go for advice and discuss their plans. Professors, lecturers, graduates and even undergraduates will take on "cases" as they come up, giving them direct experience of real-life business.

SBA is an important federal agency, active in promoting small and medium sized businesses all over America. It can draw on a vast service corps of trained managers, consultants and businessmen willing to help others starting out. The university centres are meant to channel many existing federal and state programmes to aid industry into cohesive plans for the whole region.

Cal Poly has the leading business school among the 19 campuses making up the California State University system. Last December it began a limited scheme of regular consultations for local businessmen; this has now been expanded with the building of the centre.

The projects it hopes to start include: international programmes, help for minority groups, publishing opportunities for women, the development of technology drawing on expertise in other university departments (agriculture, science, engineering and so on), helping new businesses to increase their produc-

tivity and marketing services.

No fixed grant has yet been announced by SBA, although a figure of \$30,000 for the first year is being mentioned. The teachers and students who act as consultants will not be paid, though undergraduates will be given course credit for their work.

The centre will have no direct financial stake in local businesses.

A similar centre will be opened shortly at California State University Chico. The other six will be in the midwest and on the eastern seaboard.

The Chancellor of the state university system, Dr Glenn Dunke, said the centres were "a signal recognition of the California state university's ability to teach and service institutions".

There are two difficulties he did not mention: academic politics is bedevilling attempts to coordinate all the business schools with the centre at Cal Poly, and industry in Pomona itself is depressed, so that it is doubtful whether the new centre can do much in the immediate neighbourhood.

Meanwhile, the National Science Foundation has announced it is to set up an Office of Small Business Research and Development to encourage contacts in the field of research between the foundation and the small business community. Its job will be to help small businesses get information on the foundation's programmes, collect information on grants awarded by the foundation to small businesses and reestablish White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to prepare a report on the scientific and technical capability in the small business community.

Berkeley to broaden intake

The University of California at Berkeley is to make changes in its entrance requirements because a recent survey found that it was drawing from a larger selection of the state's best qualified school-leavers than the California Masterplan for Higher Education lays down.

The study, released last week, found that Berkeley entrants come from the top 14.8 per cent of the school-leavers, compared with the top 12.5 per cent of the state.

The reason for this, it was found, was that Berkeley had a more liberal admission policy than the other universities in the state, and that it was more open to students from the state's poorer areas.

The study also found that Berkeley's intake was more diverse than the other universities in the state, and that it was more open to students from the state's poorer areas.

Progress on Canadianization

Universities in Ontario are making more efforts to recruit teachers from among Canadian citizens, Dr Harry Parrott, Minister of Colleges and Universities, says he is satisfied with their progress. Last summer Dr Parrott warned that if universities did not employ more Canadians he would consider measures to force them to.

The number of Canadians employed this year is 6 per cent higher than last year. Some of this improvement is due to a different status of those hired, but Dr Parrott forecast more general broadening of university hiring.

Of the developed countries, however, Canada is still far behind in the proportion of native academics in its universities. Last year 72 per cent of Ontario lecturers were Canadian, whereas the proportion of national citizens teaching in universities in

Part-time survey

The American Association of University Professors is to begin a two-year study of the employment of part-time teachers.

The association wants to find out whether part-time teachers are used by universities in a specialized way, that could not otherwise be provided, or just to cut costs.

Urgent need 'for better computers'

Top priority should be given to improving the language spoken by computers, according to the head of the university that has probably gone further than any other in America in using computers in education.

Dr John Kemeny, President of Dartmouth College and co-author of the Computer Language Basic (Beginners All-Purpose Symbolic Instruction Code), told a conference marking the tenth anniversary of the computer centre at Dartmouth that a higher level of language was needed to achieve reasonable communication over a network having 50 million users.

In the history of communication, the capacity for language to grow was vital to progress. "It would have been hard to achieve our level of civilization," he said. "If our languages had not grown to handle new concepts and new technologies, similarly it would be a major break-through if you could free computers from reliance on static languages and allow the language by which we talk to computers to grow as our concepts about computer uses advance."

For computers to make a positive contribution to the society of the future, he said, they had to be re-oriented to human language, judgment and creativity. But to achieve that symbiosis between man and machine required a public increasingly knowledgeable in computing and computers.

He said it was "scandalous" that so many colleges and universities still had computer systems that made computer use difficult not only for most students but even for the staff. Colleges ought not to give their students without having at least a minimum opportunity to become knowledgeable in using computers.

Dartmouth, an Ivy League college, has a computing system that allows nearly 200 people to use the computer simultaneously. Nearly 85 per cent of its students get direct experience in using computers. It has one of the most sophisticated systems in America and has done much research into the uses and application of computers in education and in society.

The college has developed its own time-sharing system for its computer, for which some 37 million programmes have been written. The centre estimates that it has educated 100,000 students in computer science since it opened in 1966, many of them from other universities.

Universities have long complained at the time—and money—they have to spend filling in forms for Washington. Now, help is on its way.

Ending the waste paper chase

Dr David Mathews looks up though he will perform his most important service to American colleges and universities just before he leaves his post as Secretary for Health, Education and Welfare.

A high-powered inter-agency task force which he set up last month has produced a set of proposals for reducing government bureaucracy, higher education and relieving universities of the heavy burden of paperwork.

The committee represents all the major agencies that impinge on universities. Its proposals represent a commitment by some 15 federal departments to cut the number of forms universities have to fill in, statistics they have to report and regulations they have to observe.

The report represents the culmination of Dr Mathews's efforts to break HEW's stranglehold on higher education, which some universities describe as a major threat to academic quality and freedom.

The proposals will be sent to President Ford, who is certain to approve them in the dying days of his Presidency. They will be warmly welcomed by the academic world, and incidentally, will cut the ground from under the incoming Carter Administration which made much during the election of its pledge to reduce federal bureaucracy.

The task force recommendations apply to colleges and universities—not to other post-secondary institutions. It suggests:

More pre-testing of the feasibility of collecting data, and its effect on universities.

Greater consultation in advance with universities.

More accurate estimate of the burden of filling in forms, the cost, the manpower needed and so on.

Secondary analysis of data already gathered to replace, where possible, new censuses and questionnaires.

The use of samples instead of inclusive surveys of all institutions.

The task force, which was only set up on November 1, includes representatives of the Veterans Administration, the Department of Labour, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the National Institutes of Health, NASA, the Office of Civil Rights and the Department of Agriculture.

Chairman Dr Robert Wright, from the National Science Foundation, the committee did not have time to hold open hearings. Members went to their agencies' complaints files for evidence, they received a mass of unsolicited documentation, and they consulted the American Council on Education which had itself coordinated the complaints of universities.

Dr Mathews said at the first meeting of the committee in the White House that the task was urgent. Universities and colleges were having to divert a major portion of their effort from teaching into strictly clerical activities and were increasing determination about the problem of federal paperwork.

Meanwhile, Dr Mathews has already taken other steps to cut out state and local governments, education agencies and those providing private non-profit services can apply to be excused from HEW regulations they believe interfere with their efforts to provide services.

Dr Mathews said one of the most frequent complaints about federal regulations was inconsistency among requirements. A university might be ordered to collect data in one way by the Office of Civil Rights, and do the same thing in a different way by the Department of Labour, for example.

But even so Dr Mathews published his proposals in the Federal Register, a new law has just been passed meaning more paperwork on the part of universities, admitting that the new regulations were "expedited after a cheating scandal".

Under the Veterans' Education and Employment Assistance Act, certification is required if no more

than 85 per cent of the students enrolled in any course are veterans. The new regulations require that the Veterans' Administration be asked its views on how best to improve the IUTs.

The committee, a consultative body composed of university principals and industrialists, has recently been revived after several years in limbo by State for Higher Education. It will present a draft report on the IUTs in March.

Set up in 1966 and today numbering 63 institutes in 56 towns, the IUTs aim to train middle-level management and technical staff through a diploma programme. Through a diploma programme, the IUTs have enrolled only 40,000 students, 5 per cent of the higher education total.

In part, failure to attract students stems from the reluctance of employers to require the IUT diploma in collective wage negotiations. This is to be rectified. Particular emphasis is to be placed on the improved prospects open to IUT graduates.

On reform in the medical curriculum, Mme Veil pointed out that between 1971 and 1973 slightly more than 60 per cent of medical graduates embarked on specialist courses. Only 30 per cent took up general practitioner studies.

A joint commission set up by the Ministry of Health in conjunction with the Secretariat of State for Higher Education has recommended new general practice courses. Lasting two years, these will take place in the interim stage. They will involve 18 months' hospital practice followed by a further six months' placement with a GP.

At present France has 85,000 medical practitioners. Projections for 1985 show the number of medical graduates will have grown to 130,000. Assuming one

estimate of man-hours, costs of record-keeping and auditing, the Office of Civil Rights criticized the Office of Education for insisting on making a survey of race, sex, handicaps and the material as in the past. The commission said such surveys should be made at least nine months in advance so that schools and states would have time to spend on extra data.

Writing in the New York Times last week, Dr Mathews said that he was a native-born Jew and that he was a native-born Jew and that he was a native-born Jew.

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Controversial technology institutes to be probed

from Tony Neave

Measures are to be taken to halt the "academic drift" in the technology institutes of the United Kingdom (IUTs). Institute heads are now being sent questionnaires on how they see the future of their establishments, and the National Education Commission is to be asked its views on how best to improve the IUTs.

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Fresh moves to widen access for adults

from Mike Duckenfield

A suggestion to introduce examinations for all over-22-year-olds wanting to prove they have sufficient knowledge to benefit from higher studies is being considered by Mrs Rita Berntsgaard, Education Minister.

Proposed by a committee set up three years ago to look into ways of broadening access to higher education, the examinations would be held over a 14-day period at universities and colleges to which entry was sought. However, success would not mean potential students down in one institution.

The idea is similar to the new national written test for over-25s without appropriate school marks seeking higher places in the new Swedish university and college systems (THES, August 20). The committee report also proposes that all those who have completed 12 years' basic education should qualify for access to higher studies. This would include nine years at the comprehensive and three years' higher secondary schooling.

The three-year period, however, need not necessarily be completed in the upper secondary schools or even in other institutions currently giving equivalent training. Nevertheless, it is recognized as an alternative other courses would incorporate theoretical studies.

Underlying the proposals is the idea that, despite numerous changes, entry should be broadened to provide easier access for those not following successive academic courses at school leading to the traditional pre-university leaving certificate (studentexamen).

However, it is stressed that standards should not be lowered and entry qualifications should include an adequate understanding of a foreign language, usually English.

The plan coincides with the decision earlier this year to start limiting entry over the next two years, including a 25 per cent cut-back in admission to the two traditional universities, Copenhagen and Aarhus. Total entry is to be stabilized at an annual 20,000 until 1980.

Entry to medicine faculties became restricted this autumn with admissions cut dramatically from last year's 1,400 to 850. Other subject areas will follow next year.

Admissions procedures are still being examined, but those for medicine allow half the places to be allocated on school marks, 40 per cent on work experience and marks and the remaining 10 per cent on individual evaluation of mature students 25 or older, who do not have the appropriate marks (THES, August 13).

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from Mike Duckenfield

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Proposed by a committee set up three years ago to look into ways of broadening access to higher education, the examinations would be held over a 14-day period at universities and colleges to which entry was sought. However, success would not mean potential students down in one institution.

The idea is similar to the new national written test for over-25s without appropriate school marks seeking higher places in the new Swedish university and college systems (THES, August 20). The committee report also proposes that all those who have completed 12 years' basic education should qualify for access to higher studies. This would include nine years at the comprehensive and three years' higher secondary schooling.

The three-year period, however, need not necessarily be completed in the upper secondary schools or even in other institutions currently giving equivalent training. Nevertheless, it is recognized as an alternative other courses would incorporate theoretical studies.

Underlying the proposals is the idea that, despite numerous changes, entry should be broadened to provide easier access for those not following successive academic courses at school leading to the traditional pre-university leaving certificate (studentexamen).

However, it is stressed that standards should not be lowered and entry qualifications should include an adequate understanding of a foreign language, usually English.

The plan coincides with the decision earlier this year to start limiting entry over the next two years, including a 25 per cent cut-back in admission to the two traditional universities, Copenhagen and Aarhus. Total entry is to be stabilized at an annual 20,000 until 1980.

Entry to medicine faculties became restricted this autumn with admissions cut dramatically from last year's 1,400 to 850. Other subject areas will follow next year.

Admissions procedures are still being examined, but those for medicine allow half the places to be allocated on school marks, 40 per cent on work experience and marks and the remaining 10 per cent on individual evaluation of mature students 25 or older, who do not have the appropriate marks (THES, August 13).

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The Westminster perspective

Higher education is on the periphery of party politics. Party policies are ambivalent and the differences between them cloudy. That at least is clear from the series of articles on the attitudes of the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Parties to higher education, which ends with Mr Alan Beith's contribution on the next page.

For most of the time there are few votes to be won or lost by cleaving the private issues faced by universities and colleges into public ones. So those are normally left to be resolved either within the system or by a small coterie of officials and knowing politicians.

Most people—perhaps a majority—in higher education will no doubt say amen. They see no advantage and many dangers in encouraging politicians to nose around in the affairs of colleges and universities. The more ignorant and the more the politicians are, the better. This is a short-sighted and counterproductive attitude.

For better or worse politicians and their officials make important decisions about the distribution of resources which have equally important consequences for the future and even the content of higher education. It is in the interests of universities and colleges that the assumptions on which those decisions are based should be as sophisticated and as open to scrutiny as possible.

Both the dangers of shallowness and the opportunities of sophistication are illustrated in the articles by Mr Gerry Fowler for Labour two weeks ago, Dr Keith Hampton for the Conservatives last week, and Mr Beith for the Liberals. On the surface the similarities seem more significant than the differences.

Yet below the surface of ritual genuflections to extending oppor-

tunity and continuing education, important differences—particularly between Labour and Conservative—emerged. The Conservative instinct in higher education policy is to preserve a hierarchy of institutions in which the special position of the universities is safeguarded at the top and a more vocationally oriented "community college" sector is encouraged to grow at the bottom.

In contrast Labour has an ambiguous policy—mainly because of the party's enduring complex about the binary policy. The polytechnics are seen as both radical rivals to the universities and the secondary moderns of course, are quite inappropriate but they have had a powerful hold on Labour emotions.

As a result Labour's instinctive policy in higher education has two, not entirely complementary, strands: first, to enhance the status of the polytechnics which in practice means loosening their links with local government; and secondly, to work towards closer co-operation at local, regional and national levels between the public sector and the universities. In many ways it is not dissimilar from Dr Kissinger's concept of "detente".

Through the proliferation of detailed arrangements for co-operation which in themselves appear to carry no grave implications for academic autonomy, the two sectors can be brought closer together and the autonomy of the universities effectively curtailed.

Sadly these interesting contrasts in political attitudes to the development of higher education remain embryonic, susceptible only to speculative analysis. But to imagine that because they are so vaguely and inarticulately expressed that they can be safely ignored would be a serious miscalculation.

That is why the publication this week of the final report of the Open University's Committee on Continuing Education, chaired by Sir Peter Venables, is so important. The committee puts its weight behind a national council for adult and continuing education, which was originally proposed in the Russell report in 1973 but has still not been set up. It also proposes that a national education service should be set up.

If these two recommendations are implemented, and one at least is long overdue, they could substantially improve the chances for adults to take up the educational opportunities they missed when younger. They might also incidentally help universities and polytechnics fill any places left empty by the dwindling number of 18-year-olds in the 1980s.

But the NUS leadership will have to reflect long and hard on the damage this new incident has done to the true interests of students. Will such public behaviour bring about the abolition of the parental lottery of the lottery of discretion? Will it help to restore the value of education? Will it indeed do anything to promote more tolerant public attitudes to cultural and racial diversity? Of course, the NUS is making it very difficult for its friends to

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Social Security Bill

Sir—You say that the purpose of clause 13 of the Government's new Social Security (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill is obvious enough, namely to prevent the supplementary benefit machinery being swamped by appeals (THE TIMES, December 3).

I doubt this. The attribution to the Christmas and Easter vacations of a national element of the grant, equivalent to the single non-householder rate of supplementary benefit, already removed the great majority of students from benefit. Most of the remainder—householders, students with children, for example—fall into clearly defined categories. Test cases there would undoubtedly have been, but once they were decided the National Union of Students would have had no incentive constantly to appeal against local decisions taken in conformity with the principles already established.

Further, the Government is to establish a hardship fund for students, to be administered by the proposed change in the law. Admittedly, the fund seems to have entered Governmental thinking late, or very late, in the day. (When your policies have deplorable consequences you should have foreseen, and not set up a hardship fund.) But it is not dissimilar from Dr Kissinger's concept of "detente".

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Supplementary Benefits Commission already have theirs, the number of cases to be examined and decided is to be greater, not less. The object of the exercise is much more vulgar. It is to save money. The exclusion of students from supplementary benefit is estimated to save only £1m per annum—clearly a national estimate. But an order is to be laid excluding students (like convicted prisoners) from contributory unemployment benefit. That will save £14m. If those hitherto entitled to unemployment benefit were not also excluded by law from supplementary benefit, many of them would claim that instead. They include a proportion higher than in the student body as a whole of those who deferred entry into higher education, with homes of their own and with children. The savings would thus have been sharply eroded.

In order to make effective the exclusion of some students, who have worked, and contributed to national insurance, from the unemployment benefit hitherto their due, it is necessary to exclude all students from the "safety net" provisions of the welfare state, designed to ensure all at least a subsistence income. That is the long and the short of it.

You are too kind to this iniquitous measure. Yours faithfully, GERRY FOWLER, The House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

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IUC contact

Sir—On a visit to this country I have been interested to see the article and correspondence in THE TIMES about the University Council and the IUC.

Some 30 other vice-chancellors, developing countries at the time we attended to our own universities through a representative of them. Moreover, German, British, Australian representatives lined the importance of their own countries to the support for the development of universities through university based co-operation.

Further, we understood that the United States studies were in progress to see how the diversity and college-based education could be created in the support for the development of universities through university based co-operation.

Had the Swann committee the opinion of overseas universities on the issue I am sure the answer would have been a resounding yes.

Yours truly, D. H. IRVINE, Vice-chancellor, University of Guyana.

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Wanted: flexibility and single funding



Alan Beith, MP, Liberal Party spokesman on education, contributes the last of three articles on the attitudes to higher education of the major political parties

There was a time not long gone when only three major factors determined the direction of higher education policy. They were, in ascending order of importance: the preferences of the Government of the day, the current trend in educational fashion, and the relative success of the various sectors and their supporters in fighting for the best place in the resources queue. The economic situation has changed all that: by its direct and indirect effects it has imposed its own restraints. The direct effects are, first, that because of cuts all existing institutions find that the public funds made available to them will not meet the inescapable increases in salaries, which inflation brings about. So it is, for example, that the universities are expected to face an average cut of four per cent in real terms next year.

Secondly, the indirect effect of the economic crisis is that at every level of the community, questions are asked about how far the education system is itself to blame for our present position, or should change in the light of it.

At one level this questioning is illustrated by a polytechnic director quoted in these pages in September as castigating "the lack of esteem given in our country, and in our education, to skills in doing, making, designing, developing, creating, manufacturing compared with the high esteem given to academic study and scholarship, to analysis and to research as the proper pursuits for the ablest minds".

At another level it will, I suspect, be represented increasingly by the able sixth-former who snatches the once-sought job in a bank rather than spend three years training for graduate unemployment. Now the Prime Minister has joined in the trend, and the good class of people involved in higher education must work out what their response is to be, if a response is not to be imposed upon them. Simply to weather the storm of the cuts as if it is going to pass over in a year or so is to ignore the realities.

I see two main reasons for the First concerns the A-level and on which offers to candidates a choice. If a boy or girl has been working hard at three or four subjects and doing well in them, it comes as a shock to be offered a choice of two Cs, two Bs, or two Es.

This can have (and has had) following unwelcome effects on a candidate thereafter stops working hard at three or four subjects and doing well in them, it comes as a shock to be offered a choice of two Cs, two Bs, or two Es.

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In any case, programmes will be put forward by others, although any political party which pretends to have a clear blueprint for the future structure of higher education is certainly both arrogant and wrong. I would be content to see the development of some key proposition as the basis of a reconsideration of the system which allows students to transfer between institutions and to interrupt their education with a period of work in an appropriate field.

The first is that it is useless to suppose that education in general, or higher education in particular, can continue to command a share of resources which grows faster each year than national income itself. The days of general growth are over, and we should recognize that fact.

The second is that we must recognize that education ought to be a lifelong process. Far from being a platitude, this is a challenge to the state, to the university, to the employer, to the individual, to the community, to the nation, to the world.

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It is my belief that the removal of the distinctions of status and financial control which mark the binary system could make this artificial competition over confused goals unnecessary. It would not, of course, need to be accompanied by the amalgamation of institutions, as is sometimes suggested, but it would call for the development of a new single funding system for higher education.

Such a system should seek to retain the element of autonomy possessed by the University Grants Committee, rather than following the model of local authority control, but it should operate at regional and not national level.

My fourth assumption would be that we should maintain the social objectives of widening the range of people to whom the opportunities of higher education are available. This is not the same thing as maintaining a constant increase in the number of students in full-time higher education, although it does involve attempting to encourage potentially good applicants amongst socially disadvantaged groups, amongst women in the fields in which they have hitherto not been represented, and amongst racial minorities.

And it also involves earmarking some additional resources for the further education sector, which can do a lot more than any other sector to bring higher education to these groups.

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And it also involves earmarking some additional resources for the further education sector, which can do a lot more than any other sector to bring higher education to these groups.

The last of my assumptions is that this discussion, and any change which results from it, must be in the open. I do not want to see us live through a repeat of the

It is my belief that the removal of the distinctions of status and financial control which mark the binary system could make this artificial competition over confused goals unnecessary. It would not, of course, need to be accompanied by the amalgamation of institutions, as is sometimes suggested, but it would call for the development of a new single funding system for higher education.

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Forthcoming events

The European Atlantic Movement's European Studies grant-aided tour will take place between 10 and 16. Visits to Strasbourg, Bonn, Brussels and Bruges have been arranged, where members will meet senior members of the International Staffs at the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Court of Justice, the European Investment Bank and Nato. Bursaries of about £100 reduce the charge to around £10 per day. A detailed prospectus is available from the European Atlantic Movement, 7 Cathedral Close, Exeter, EX1 1EZ.

Honorary degrees

Edinburgh
D Honours Cause: Dr Mordaunt, president of the University of Edinburgh, and Dr Edmund Wollenstein, retiring director, for external affairs of the C of the EEC.
DLit: Professor David Ditcher, professor of English at the University of Sussex.

Survey
Honorary degrees have been conferred on the following: Mr Corfield, deputy chairman, managing director of Standard phones and cables, and director for ITI in the UK; Mr Thorold Dickinson, emeritus professor of film studies at the film at London University; and professor of film studies in the general studies department of the University of Surrey; Dr Joseph Neill, director of the Centre for the Study of the History of the College, Cambridge.

Recent publication

Postgraduate Opportunities in
Economy and Geophysics 1977-78
by the Royal Astronomical Society
Burlington House, Piccadilly, W1
The second edition of this
booklet brings together basic
of astronomical and geophysics
research and courses with
offered at British universities.
to inform prospective students
of studies available to them
where these may be done. How-
is not a complete guide to all
*
Jersey, a new guide to the Isle
to holidaymakers by Robin Meade
Illustrations by Arthur Horne
Modern Guides
ed. 95p, covers in detail
shops, shopping, bays and beaches
history, sailing and entertainment

Noticeboard is compiled by Patricia Santinelli and Pauline Gamble.

Scorn not the sermon

Let me begin with the appropriate courtesies. Here are three anthologies: beautifully produced, carefully selected, introduced with theological tact and historical sensitivity. They provide the best introduction to the most neglected of all the major forms of English literature. On this pipe played Cranmer, Latimer, Hooker, Andrews, Donne, Laud, Taylor, Butler, Berkeley, Swift, Wesley, Sterne, Maugham, and Newman. Scorn and the sermon.

But who will read them? Few modern travellers visit the secret landscape of the sermon. They speculate brackish wells and the terminal moraines of official religion. They find Donum privatum, marvelling perhaps that so magnificent a mind apparently believed he was a sinner redeemed by the blood of Christ. Students of English literature know Adam Sedgwick is a creature of prose because Elton tells them so. Methodist local preachers are forcibly fed on Wesley's sermons and find they have ingested a body of wholesome and rational divinity. They know that Sedgwick is "an on the Catholic side" is an education in measured prose and in clerical orthodoxy. But Methodist local preachers are declining, diminishing elite. The Western academy preaches that the West is a mixture of cant and rant, conformity in politics and degraded enthusiasm in religion. As for minor masters like Thomas Adams or Robert South they are as though

million Anglican sermons have been delivered to the English people over the past four centuries the new residue left in the *Oxford Book of Quotations* is seven entries: three from Ben Jonson, one from John Donne, one from Andrewes, Taylor, South and Newton. Laud is remembered for nothing, not even his poignant prayer before execution, whereas Harry Lauder equals the united efforts of the last thousand divines over four centuries. Yet the prayer is one of the most glorious utterances in our language, as touching and terrible as the prayers of Cromwell just before his death.

Lord, I am coming as fast as I can. I know I must pass through the shadow of death, a mere shadow, *umbra mortis*, a mere shadow of death, a gloomy darkness upon the face of this world, but thou, by thy mercy and passion, hast broken through the jaws of death.

That can be forgotten anything but the forgotten, including the best of the best.

Perhaps there is a special blight associated with sermonizing: the fear of formal public speech. We approve the parlour corner

**"The Ritual of Battle: Krishna
the Mahābhārata
by Alf Hiltebeitel
Cornell University Press, £13.65
ISBN 0 8014 0970 5**

The sub-title reveals the main interests of this book, with especial reference to the great Indian epics, the *Mahabharata* in conventional and unusual aspects: the Marriage Draupadi and Three Krishnas, Krishna's nescence from the Dhanu Game and comparisons of Krishna with Odinn. Despite the order of the parts, "Preliminaries", "Before the War", "The War", "After the War", "The End of the War", "The End of the World", "The End of the Universe", "The End of Time", "The End of Space", "The End of Matter", "The End of Energy", "The End of Life", "The End of Death", "The End of Everything".

the war "World Sovereignty and the 'End of an Age' the little development of a century, such as the ritual of battle to draw it together, though the two useful side lights on the war

John Wesley preaching to the Indians, from an engraving after a painting by Benjamin West, © Radio Times Hulton Picture Library.

approach and prefer our verbal reduction carefully casual, and cleverly absent-minded. Formal presence of mind is a social abomination in sin worse than sequential thinking. We worship the mild and anthers just as we admire the virtue of anti-heroes. In short we are tuckers the quieter touch. Command of words is an authoritarian trait which scores heavily on our index of insincerity. The last link in our brilliant dinosaur dying out in a terran which is shrinking in scale. He is the last link in a chain that goes back to the moral discourses of Bright or Gladstone. The last link in the chain is Isaac Foot, preacher, begat Michael Foot, orator, but who follows in their

To appreciate and enjoy the sermon you need to know a little of the history which means the Bible, the liturgy and the sacred story. You cannot read these works properly unless your mind has been saturated in an imagery of cornfields and kings, vineyards and shepherds, and the names of the men of Bethel and daughters of Jerusalem. Every phrase starts an echo and the artistic science of the preacher is to cross-breed different families of imagery. A sermon can extend and enrich your imagination and begins with a reminder. The preacher assumes you have heard certain phrases over and over again, in sickness and in health, in boredom and in pleasure, until they have become the power to heal and subvert. He needs to make a willing submission to a particular kind of power and accept a particular imagery, limits to a convention. The world is the sermon, the sermon world of care and cure, habit and use. This is why the works printed here are still partly unavailable. A modern mental world built on no religion, on collections of received ideas and a throwaway stimuli cannot really receive these

what is involved in pondering a text. It cannot allow the mind to darken slowly enough for the luminous point to appear.

So the secret landscape of the sermon does not disclose itself to the existential tourist. Of course, the tourist can read the text without of curiosity, just as you can enjoy an elegant verse on an eighteenth-century memorial. There are sermons here which provide the tourist with a glimpse of the Monument of the Hon. Robert Digby* at Sherborne or his "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady". You can read Auberger's "A Discourse occasioned by the death of the Right Hon. John Durs" just as you can stop off to take a turn around Sherborne Abbey. You can

also use some of these sermons as subtle indirect guides to the interior of that dark history. The Restoration sermons do convey the latent horror of revolution just as the post-Reformation sermons convey a zeal for reform. Let me conclude with two excerpts. The first is the final chapter of a sermon preached by St. Clement Danes nearly 400 years ago; here at least the message is plain enough:

The Scripture saith "Give to everyone that asketh." God gave herbs and other food unto every living creature. Every man that letteth any member in to die to perish for hunger, is an unnatural and uncharitable commonwealth. . . . Let us consider of their misery, that with hungry bellies and empty bowels, willingly feed on that which you wastefully consume; the poor say, would find good comfort of that which you commonly fling to your dogs and on your dung hills. And thus, my friends, will poverty and want compel many an honest person to take in hand the performance of much wilfulness and slavish business: and that therefore they deserve to be

rather than to be despised for their poor estate. There is much more like this, including Latham's mighty expostulation to the bourgeois of London in 1726, in which he castigates them for their "avarice and avarice."

The other excerpt—a group of excerpts—has an equally contented temporary echo. George Berkeley is preaching to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1726, and he says, "I have seen the state of the Christian religion in a declining state" and so one can hardly expect piety in the American colonies. In 1726, the Island of the South Sea was not only considered to be like the Anglican Church but equally have ceased to care for the religion at all. Several of the better

"So?" Meantime the Lords had said
 their say, and they were to be found in the
 settled areas. The heathen were
 hardly touched, partly because—
 "An ancient antipathy to the
 Indians whom our first planters
 imagine they had right to treat as
 the folk of Canaanites or of
 Scites, together with an irrational
 contempt of the Blacks, as creatures
 of another species . . ." Yet "the
 unstemmed torrent of profane
 may possibly in the conclusion
 defeat itself, confident as man
 is of his own strength, and in
 ing, proves a means of preserving
 a religion."
 I have not quoted the great p
 sages, because rhetoric depends
 on artful repetitions and the accumu
 lation of words, and the more
 of truth has to be set slowly w
 disciplined craftsmanship, turnin
 the point at issue in every divi
 tion. The pleasures of divinity gr
 slowly as if there were all the t
 in the world, and thus in the
 words of Hieronymus Maunus
 sunt, fuerant, et sunt. Ven
 quise forte future
 grammata hæc. monstr
 famula curata suo.

David Mar

David Martin

The making of an Indian myth

**The Ritual of Battle: Krishna
the Mahabharata**
by Alf Hiltebeitel
Cornell University Press, £13.65
ISBN 0 8014 0970 5

The sub-title reveals the main interests of this book, with especial reference to the great Indian epics, the *Mahabharata* in conventional and unusual aspects: the Marriage Draupadi and Three Krishnas, Krishna's nescence from the Dhanu Game and comparisons of Krishna with Odinn. Despite the order of the parts, "Preliminaries", "Before the War", "The War", "After the War", "The End of the War", "The End of the World", "The End of the Universe", "The End of Time", "The End of Space", "The End of Matter", "The End of Energy", "The End of Life", "The End of Death", "The End of Everything".

the war "World Sovereignty and the 'End of an Age' the little development of a century, such as the ritual of battle to draw it together, though the two useful side lights on the war

Professor Hillebrhelte begins with a valuable distinction of myth and legend; myths are timeless, dealing with the origin, nature and destiny of man, and of the living gods and actors. Legends deal with specific times and places, consider the nature of man and their actors are heroes. Other writers, like Dumézil, write of heroes as inflexible copies of nature and reality, they are not to differ from them in character and action. Myths may show divine foibles yet the gods are "whimsically pure"; act out of their own nature and reveal the nature of the universe. But heroes commit sins and have some freedom, so that the *Mahabhidrata* says that "virtue and sin exist only among men".

The great despatch of the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavad-*

Gītā, in which Kṛiṣṇa reveals his form to Arjuna, is linked to a previous theology, ignored by most western critics except Rudolf Otto, in which Kṛiṣṇa shows himself to be the highest Brahman, the most important in the developing theism of the Gītā and it has long been used ritually in preparation for entry into the life of renunciation (śrāyāsa). The identification of Kṛiṣṇa and Viṣṇu, as the vision does, the Gītā is revealing one of its essential teachings. Yet such identity hardly appears anywhere else in the Gītā; not in the "avatara" chapter, chapter four, nor in the *bhakti* verse of chapter 12 and 18, and only once and almost casually in the identifications of chapter 10 where Kṛiṣṇa is revealed in Viṣṇu but also in Śiva, Indra and many others.

Like many recent exponents of Indian mythology Hillebrandt makes comparisons with other mythologies; not only those of Iran and Greece, but with Germany, Scandinavia and Ireland, but two objections come constantly to mind. One is that parallels are rarely exact, each myth having its special emphases; the other is that general similarities may occur in widely separated myths and could be a natural choice among a variety of possible themes. Hillebrandt perhaps considered this for his short and cautious conclusion that the formation of myth and epic went on a long time, through a process of change and growing tradition.

Geoffrey Parrind

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